

BRIDGE ACROSS THE WHITE RIVER, ARK.

FEBRUARY 17 (calendar day, FEBRUARY 20), 1925.—Ordered to be printed

Mr. SHEPPARD, from the Committee on Commerce, submitted the following

REPORT

[To accompany S. 4317]

The Committee on Commerce, to whom was referred the bill (S. 4317) granting the consent of Congress to the county of Jackson, Ark., to construct, maintain, and operate a bridge across the White River at or near the city of Newport, in the county of Jackson, in the State of Arkansas, have considered the same and report thereon with an amendment, and as so amended, recommend that the bill do pass.

The bill thus amended has the approval of the Departments of War and Agriculture, as will appear by the annexed communications; the amendment referred to therein having been incorporated in the bill as reported.

Page 1, line 5, strike out the words "and assigns."

WAR DEPARTMENT, *February 19, 1925.*

Respectfully returned to the chairman Committee on Commerce, United States Senate.

So far as the interests committed to this department are concerned, I know of no objection to the favorable consideration of the accompanying bill, S. 4317, Sixty-eight Congress, second session, granting the consent of Congress to the county of Jackson, Ark., to construct, maintain, and operate a bridge across the White River at or near the city of Newport, in the county of Jackson, in the State of Arkansas.

As the navigable portions of the White River do not lie within the limits of a single State the consent of Congress is required under section 9 of the river and harbor act of March 3, 1899 (30 Stat. 1151), for the construction of a bridge thereover.

JOHN W. WEEKS, *Secretary of War.*

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE,
Washington, February 20, 1925.

Hon. WESLEY L. JONES,
*Chairman Committee on Commerce,
United States Senate.*

DEAR SENATOR JONES: Receipt is acknowledged of your letter of February 16 transmitting a copy of the bill S. 4317 with the request that the committee be furnished with such suggestions touching the merits of the bill and the propriety of its passage as the department might deem appropriate.

This bill would authorize the county of Jackson, Ark., and its successors and assigns, to construct, maintain, and operate a bridge and approaches thereto across the White River at or near the city of Newport in said county. Section 2 of the bill provides that the State, or any political subdivision or division thereof, within or adjoining which said bridge may be located, may at any time, by agreement or by condemnation, acquire all right, title, and interest in said bridge and approaches thereto, constructed under the authority of the act, for the purpose of maintaining and operating same as a free bridge, by paying to the owners the reasonable value thereof not to exceed in any event the construction cost. This section also provides that the State, or any political subdivision or division thereof, which may so acquire said bridge may operate the same as a toll bridge for not to exceed five years from the date of its acquisition.

The site indicated for the construction of the proposed bridge is on an important route included in the Federal-aid system approved for Arkansas. Information has come to this department that the county judge of Jackson County contemplates granting, and in fact has requested and received petitions from interested private parties for a franchise for the construction of a toll bridge across the White River at Newport. This department would regret very much to see a toll bridge constructed at this point. It, therefore, is suggested that, in order to provide against such a contingency, the words "and assigns" appearing in line 5, page 1, of the bill be eliminated. If the bill should be amended so as to grant the right to construct the bridge to the county of Jackson without the right to make any assignment of such authorization, then it may be unnecessary to retain section 2 in the bill. If the bill should be amended in line with the above suggestions, the department can see no objection to its passage.

Sincerely,

HOWARD M. GORE, *Secretary.*